

FORT SILL QUARTERLY ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

January 2014

Winter



This newsletter provides helpful household and unit tips for protecting the environment and complying with environmental laws and regulations.

Did you know: Storm drains lead directly to rivers, lakes, and streams?

- Dumping chemicals down a storm drain adversely impacts drinking water quality and wildlife.
- Dispose of chemicals properly—dispose of household chemicals in household waste according to manufacturers direction or thru recycling centers (motor oil for examples can be recycled at oil change centers).
- For units—ensure chemicals are managed and disposed of in accordance with

MSDS requirements

- Clean up all chemical / fuel spills when they happen.

Did you know: Common household products could be considered hazardous waste?

- Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) is any household product which has the potential to harm the user or the environment . It can be toxic, flammable (can catch fire), caustic (cause burns) or be chemically reactive (react or explode when mixed with other substances).
- Always read labels on household chemicals for proper handling and disposal procedures.
- Disposing of household chemicals in your trash is dangerous. When mixed, household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia cause poisonous gases and fumes or cause fires.
- Keep materials in original containers or properly labeled
- Whenever possible, purchase alternatives to environmentally hazardous household chemicals.

Only Rain Down the Storm Drain!

Chemicals for melting ice on sidewalks and driveways can pose risks to the environment.

It's been a icy winter in southwest Oklahoma this year. The frequent icing has caused hazardous conditions on sidewalks, driveways and roadways. The use of ice melting chemicals can create safer conditions for you and the environment if used properly. The chemicals used for melting ice on these surfaces is generally composed of Rock Salt which is an unrefined course salt (sodium chloride) as well as calcium chloride and magnesium chloride. Most ice melting products are typically inexpensive and can be highly effective. Unfortunately if used improperly or in excessive amounts it can cause damage to the environment and children/pets if not applied properly . Concentrated amounts can cause damage to plants if their leaves/roots are exposed to the product. Additionally concentrated amounts of the product can cause skin irritation with prolonged skin contact or gastrointestinal upset if ingested.. The products which contain only Rock Salt should be used only at or near freezing temperatures. They are less effective at very cold temperatures due to the effectiveness of the salt during freeze thaw re-freeze cycles. Products with additions of calcium chloride and magnesium chloride can be used at

lower temperatures due to the effectiveness of those chemicals at lower temperatures. The best way to treat sidewalks and driveways while limiting risk to the environment, pets and people are noted below.

- Put the product down before the snow or ice comes. It's easier to prevent ice than to get rid of it.
- Apply the product thinly, but evenly over the surface. Using more won't get that much better ice control and could cause damage to plants/grass and cause injuries to children and pets.
- Once the product loosens up the snow or ice pack, shovel it away so it won't refreeze as the water continues to dilute the chemicals.
- Keep the pavement dry so you don't need to apply more ice melting product.

For further information about compliance with environmental laws / regulations please contact Environmental Quality Division, DPW, 580-442-3266.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle